Nixon's: Return Visit

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In his first venture out on the town since before the Watergate hearings began in May, President Nixon accompanied family and friends to Trader Vic's Monday night for a Polynesian-Chinese dinner.

It was Mr. Nixon's second visit to the restaurant this year.

"We had an hour off," First Lady Pat Nixon told reporters later, "and we decided why not be young again and go along."

During the evening, Mr. Nixon let it be known that he might visit Italy "in about two or three months," apparently backing up predictions that his proposed trip to Western Europe this fall has been postponed.

The President, wearing a maroon sport coat, and Mrs. Nixon joined the dinner date that their son-in-law and daughter, David and Julie Eisenhower, had made with another couple, Bob and Cynthia Milligan.

Milligan, a former Justice Department tax attorney, is with the Commerce Department. His wife, also an attorney, is the daughter of former Secretary of Agriculture Clifford Hardin.

The President's first visit to Trader Vic's, in the Statler-Hilton at 16th and L Streets NW, was on Valen-

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President and Mrs. Nixon and Cathy Kitchell, a waitress at Trader Vic's, where the Nixon night. Nixon son-in-law David Eisenhower is behind them.

tine's Day eve, shortly after the end of the Vietnam war and before Watergate had again dominated the headlines.

That outing was one of a series of casual visits the President made around town at the time. A few days earlier, he had stopped for tea with Alice Roosevelt Longworth to congratulate her on her 89th birthday. On another occasion, the Nixons showed up at National Theater to see Debbie Reynolds star in "Irene."

Monday night's "youthful" sortie included gardenias, mai-tais and table-hopping. There was no mention of Watergate or Vice President Spiro Agnew, either by Mr. Nixon or the crowd of about 100 onlookers who gathered outside the hotel later.

The Nixon party showed up at the dark, bamboo-and-tiki-laden restaurant at 7 o'clock on about five minutes' notice from the Secret Service, according to assistant restaurant manager Tom Moyer.

Mr. Nixon's departure after dinner wasn't quite so abrupt—he table-hopped his way out of the restaurant about 1½ hours after he arrived. He stopped to pose for pictures with Saudi Arabian Ambassador Ibrahim Al-Sowayel and his son, Talal, who were among the "25 to 30" diners the President spoke to on his way out, restaurant manager William Chow said. "It took him half an hour to get out of here," Chow added.

Once outside on the sidewalk, the elder Nixons stopped to chat with the crowd, greeting, among others, an Italian child shoved forward by his tourist father.

It was then that Mr. Nixon remarked about the possible date for his trip to their homeland. White House aides said they could not supply an exact date for the journey.

The President told W. L. Travis, manager of the Chapstick factory in Memphis, Tenn., about the time R. F. Taylor, then a U.S. Senator from Tennessee, "sat behind me at the 1952 convention, rooting for me for vice president—at a time when I didn't think anybody was."

"I'm with you 101 per cent," said Travis.

"We're with *you*" said the President and started to tell Travis about a forthcoming presidential trip (Oct. 13) to open the Cordell Hull Dam next week in Tennessee . . .

"I loved that China trip," interjected Travis, who appeared to be leaning on the presidential limousine.

The President, aware, no doubt, that Monday was the 24th anniversary of the People's Republic of China, told Travis that the Trader Vic's waiters had "asked us about their homes in China," naming various cities.

The President continued. "Some day we hope all their homes will be . . ."

"She's your number one ambassador," Travis interrupted pointing to Mrs. Nixon who was also working her way toward the limousine.

Inside Trader Vic's, the President sipped a mai-tai ("three kinds of fine rum," said manager Chow) and Mrs. Nixon had a Jack Daniels. The Eisenhowers and the Milligans, who departed without fanfare from a side exit, had mai-tais. The rest of the menu included egg rolls, crab Rangoon, lobster Cantonese, pressed almond duck, beef and tomattoes, sweet and sour pork, fried rice, snow peas, and for dessert "royal tropical fruits."

A spokesman for Trader Vic's said the restaurant would bill the White House for the Nixon party's dinner.

Monday afternoon, Mr. Nixon made another impromptu excursion when he and White House aide Alexander M. Haig took a one-hour, 50-minute drive through the Northern Virginia suburbs.